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ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with local educational agencies' interpretation of federal and state sex equity policies. After briefly discussing "slippage" that occurs as policy decisions move through federal and state systems, the article addresses legitimacy and implementation issues. Since sex equity policies have goals for altering administrative behaviors, programs, and procedures, educators' views and values are important. This article describes a survey of administration journals most often read by practitioners. Four female student analysts perused 50 issues of 4 journals published from 1972 to 1983. Their content analysis showed the types and amount of information obtained. Findings revealed that "equal opportunity," "equality," and "equity" usually referred to race, economic background, and ethnicity, and seldom included sex. When equity articles did appear, most were geared toward strategies for women, not organizations. Of the four journals, "Phi Delta Kappan" had the most comprehensive coverage of sex equity issues. In general, practitioners' journals assigned these issues low priority. School administration is still fraught with norms, mobility systems, and stereotypes preventing women from attaining high positions. Elimination of sexism has not happened, and government enforcement has been undermined. Clearly, the analyzed journals are not contributing to practitioner's value transformation. Appended are three tables and 22 references. (MLH)

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TRANSLATION OF POLICY TO PRACTITIONERS: ANALYSIS OF SEX EQUITY IN ADMINISTRATORS' JOURNALS

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TRANSLATION OF POLICY TO PRACTITIONERS: ANALYSIS OF SEX EQUITY IN ADMINISTRATORS' JOURNALS

Policy analysts need better ways to understand how local educational agencies (LEA's) interpret federal policy. Implementation of federal and state policy in education systems is a slippery process. Slippage occurs during policy formulation, through compromising, budget negotiations, trade-offs, and in response to interest group pressure. Slippage occurs as policy is passed through the federal system, which often puts state agencies in charge of training, resource allocation, monitoring and/or evaluation. Then state policy systems affect and interpret policy according to their own priorities, politics, and personnel. The courts and state commissioners may translate policy and undermine or intensify implementation. Thus we cannot view federal policy as having a direct impact on the decisions and actions of a local superintendent, curriculum director, or principal.

Weatherly and Lipsky (1977) tell us that "street level bureaucrats" at the local level mold federal and state policy to fit local realities during the policy implementation process. Berman and McLaughlin (1978) suggest that federal policy is not truly implemented and incorporated in the ongoing processes of a school system unless mutual adaptation occurs. A policy is a negotiated entity; policy is altered in response to the local school district's needs and demands while, at the same time, the LEA makes changes which alter the local system in the direction of the original policy intent.

We know that local implementation may be implementation in a loosely coupled system (Weick, 1976). Thus, policy directives from above may or may not be communicated, implemented, supervised or evaluated. Further, we know from Sproull's (1977) research that educators at each level of policy

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implementation will have their own individual interpretation of policy. Greenfield (1973) and Meyer and Rowan (1977) remind us to look for the subjective meanings of activities and policies in organizations.

Thus, policy analysts need to focus on the microlevel, the local district and the school site level to find out how locals interpret, translate, and place their own subjective meanings on any policy. The policy implementation process can not be mapped and policy outcomes cannot be explained without knowledge of how local educators obtain information, translate, mold, and use (or abuse) the policy as they implement it.

The Research Significance: The Search for the Relationship between Policy Legitimation and Policy Outcomes

Policies are power plays, attempts to get people or systems to do something they might not otherwise do." In education policy, the policy-makers may be members of Congress, state legislators, judges, state education agency (SEA) regulators or school board members. When they make policy they seek to change educators' behavior, attitudes and/or the standard operating procedures of school systems.

There is some agreement that people and systems will change in response to policy, provided they have adequate knowledge and incentives. However, philosophers, policymakers and managers have long debated the question of whether a law or policy can force people to change their attitudes or beliefs.

Policies which require change in attitude and beliefs seek to alter value systems in individuals and in institutions. As such, they must have legal legitimacy (through official enactment and enforcement) but, more importantly, they must have substantive legitimacy. Habermas (1975) describes the importance of substantive legitimacy, noting that policies and institutions will lose legitimacy--and public support--if they defy the norms and beliefs of those required to enforce and sustain the policies

and institutions. Thus, policy must have mechanisms for formal, legal implementation and for providing information and instruction for altering norms and beliefs.

Sex equity policies have goals for altering behaviors, programs, procedures, and beliefs in education systems. Thus, it is important to examine educators' views of sex equity, including their beliefs and values and their ways of conveying the value of sex equity policy. Weatherford (1982) points out that the political opinions and activity of individuals depend upon "interpersonal contact to spread the message or to underline the salience" (p. 117) of a decision or policy. Policy analysis seldom focuses on this message-spreading and value-imparting mechanism.

Federal policy for sex equity in schools has had minimal, and varying, legal legitimacy. Policies, outlined in Figure One, have been irregularly enforced. In most school districts affirmative action is simply an additional form/assurance which is signed by the superintendent. Title IX has been weakened by court decisions which question whether it applies to employment and whether it applies to all programs or just to those which receive federal funds. (See Marshall and Gray, 1982, for an analysis of the problems of enforcing equity for women in school systems.)

Most of the sex equity policies seek to alter behavior, program, and procedure. Only two--the Women's Educational Equity Act and the Vocational Education Act--provide for training and curricula which might alter beliefs and attitudes and thus provide substantive legitimacy for sex equity policy. Both of these policies have received low funding and have been weakened by political changes.

Since educators will, at best, implement sex equity policy insofar as

it is enforced and insofar as it does not require alteration of their values, attitudes, and their standard procedures, we can expect that local interpretations will be a crucial variable in sex equity policy implementation.

The Research Significance: Diffusion of Knowledge in Education

Carlson (1972) says that superintendents share information by networks, Johnson and Licata (1982) document the grapevine structure that spreads information among school administrators, and Louis (1981) notes that knowledge utilization does not occur simply by exposing practitioners to information.

In reality, much of the work of educational administrators is dealing with crisis situations in day-to-day, face-to-face interactions. Practitioners have little time to search for comprehensive information to solve problems or institute change. What they know about education research or education policy is usually derived from formal training, prior experience, phone calls, newsletters, advice from fellow administrators, workshops on high priority issues, and short articles in journals oriented to practitioners and knowledge from public media. It is useful and informative to analyze the formal training, prior experience and informal interaction of administrators to see what forms their knowledge base and attitudes.

Callahan (1962) and Callahan and Button (1964) have described the field of educational administration by analyzing the formal training and the image of administrators. This article uses a similar method for analyzing education administration. A content analysis of practitioners' journals shows the types and amount of information administrators obtain. This analysis provides a view of the concern and knowledge that administrators, who receive these journals, have for sex equity in educational administration.

Research Significance: The Focus on Equity

Most importantly this research provides information for people who are working to eliminate sex inequities in education. If practitioners seek information on background, requirements and priority of policies from practitioners' journals or if practitioners' journals reflect the tenor of the times and provide timely, relevant information, then by analyzing their content we can get a view of administrators' translations of sex equity policy.

In sum, this research contributes to knowledge of our educational system in the following ways:

1) It explores the areas in policy implementation where policy slippage occurs, especially in the communication and translation of policy.

2) It explores an area of policy implementation where policy has legal legitimacy but lacks moral legitimacy and focuses on a potential agent of moral legitimacy--the practitioner journal.

And

3) it provides a measure of the attention of practitioners' journals to sex equity in employment

Method of Research

Exploratory content analysis was conducted of titles and contents of a sample of fifty issues of four journals published from 1972-83. The four analysts were female students, knowledgeable in educational administration and sex equity. They identified appropriate categories for substance and format. The subsequent content analysis of all issues was conducted by the

same four analysts. Researchers (e.g., Sadker, Sadker and Hicks, 1980; Pajak and Blumberg, 1978; Dunbar, 1983) have devised similar approaches to analysis for gauging administrators' perceptions. The data were collected to show the following:

1) The substance in categories entitled Historical View of Women in Education; Career Patterns; Strategies/Advice for Women; Strategies/Advice for Organizations; Facts on Sex Discrimination/Law; and Comprehensive Coverage;
2) The format, in categories entitled Opinion; Research Review; Research Report; Policy Update, How-To; and Book Review; and
3) The priority is based on the amount of journal space devoted to equity for women in administration.

"Substance Categories" were defined as the main message of the article; "Format Categories" were defined as the format or basis for the main message of the article. "Priority" would be measured by computing the percentage of pages given for the sex equity article in the particular issue. "Special Reports" were defined as journal issues where sex equity was the main theme, was featured on the front cover, or where the journal included a series of three or more articles on sex equity or much of the journal was devoted to sex equity.

In the second phase of the analysis, the same analysts skimmed titles and content and then recorded the substance, the focus, the priority and the special reports of all information on sex equity in administration. Analysts resolved questions about appropriate categories by consensus. For example, where articles focused on aspects of Title IX dealing with sports, students and curriculum, analysts agreed that these were not about women's equity in school administration. Articles about school boards' attitudes

toward women's roles and articles about court decisions on work and pregnancy, analysts agreed, were relevant to women's equity in school administration. Where articles mentioned women's equity within an article about larger issues, the analysts estimated the amount of space devoted to women's equity.

This method of content analysis was devised because it could yield data derived from the original research purpose and was, therefore, superior to a computer search since it allowed for skimming the articles for their substance, identifying subtle trends in journals' treatment of sex equity, and inter-analyst agreement on content. However, the method is time-consuming.

The particular practitioners' journals were chosen based on their high circulation, their editorial policies which assert a mission to feature articles on administration, policy, and social issues, and based on the fact that they are received by the members of the largest national associations of educational administrators (see Figure Two).

The Findings

It was apparent that "equal opportunity," "equality," and "equity" usually referred to race, economic background, and ethnicity and seldom included sex. For example, a five page article entitled "The Social Foundations of Education: Update on the Educational Opportunity Debate" (Elementary Principalship, 1976) had no mention of sex equity. Where these journals did focus on sex equity, especially relating to Title IX implementation, they focused primarily on sex stereotyping in curriculum, counseling, classroom practices, and sports.

The particular findings, from the analysis focusing on women in educational administration, are presented in Figure 3.

In addition the following general observations can be made from all four journals:

1. The three most often reported categories of substantive information were (a) facts on discrimination and law, (b) strategies/advice for women, and (c) strategies/advice for organizations.
2. The greatest quantity of information was reported after 1976. The special report issues (Phi Delta Kappan, The School Administrator and The Bulletin of NASSP) occurred in 1976-1980.
3. The National Elementary Principal lags far behind the other three journals in its coverage of equity for women in educational administration.
4. The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals has noticably regressed in its coverage of equity for women in educational administration during 1981-1983 since its special issue in December 1980. It has even, in some cases, reverted to the use of "he" in referring to principals.
5. Of all the four journals, Phi Delta Kappan shows the largest range of of substance and formats over the years in its coverage of equity for women in educational administration.
6. Coverage of sex equity in employment constituted .008 of the space in journal pages from 1972-1983.

   The amount of coverage was correlated with policy changes. In the four journals the total coverage in 1972-76 was 67 pages; .007 of total; in 1977-80 was 102 pages; .02 of total: and in 1981-83 was 103 pages; .025 of total.

   (These are generous estimates, counting 1/3 and ½ pages as one page.)

This coverage can be seen as mirroring the new regulations for Title IX in 1976 and the increasing use of WEEA funds to re-educate educators in 1977-80. Coverage continued, despite the 1981-83 decline in enforcement of sex equity with the political undermining of WEEA and the judicial and political weakening of Title IX.

7. The School Administrator and Phi Delta Kappan made more use of the "Policy Update" format; the National Elementary Principal made more use of the "Opinion" format; and The Bulletin of the NASSP made more use of "Research Reports" and "How-To" formats in their coverage of equity for women in educational administration. The most frequent format for coverage of sex equity was the "Policy Update" with a substantive focus on "Facts on Sex Discrimination and Law." For example, the journals tracked the court decisions regarding pregnancy, Title IX, employment and the like.
8. By comparing the amount of coverage, we can see that the journals emphasized strategies and advice for women (19%) more than strategies and advice for organizations (7%).
9. The journals included very few comprehensive or indepth articles containing information, the facts, history, policy, and law strategies for change, and research regarding women in educational administration.

Of special note were articles which stood out for their integrative theme and approach. The March 1983 issue of The School Administrator featured an article on redefining leadership of a new age which discussed male and female roles, and raised questions on assumptions about leadership. This approach

placed women's issues in the context of effective leadership and quality in education. Several of the National Elementary Principal's 1983 articles appear integrative; one featured a story of a principal turning a school around, with a picture of the principal but no special emphasis on the fact that she is a woman. Another article noted the new approaches to looking at differences between men and women in careers by raising questions about life cycle differences.

One sees that, if measured by practitioners' journals' reportage, equity for women in educational administration has not been a priority issue. Educators would not have adequate information if they relied on these journals for their understanding of the complex organizational, societal, and historical factors which have contributed to the underutilization of women in educational administration, for the relevant research and facts, and for effective remedies. More importantly, the small amount of coverage and the focus on policies tells educators that sex equity is a small issue which can be managed by keeping abreast of the letter of the law. The dearth of comprehensive coverage and attention shown in practitioners' journals may well reflect a shallow concern about and knowledge of sex equity.

Implications

This study demonstrates the value of the use of content analysis of practitioners journals as a key to identifying educators' knowledge and concern for sex equity. Clearly, educators obtain information from sources other than these journals, but the high circulation journals do show patterns of reportage and such patterns can be correlated in future research with patterns of implementation of policy.

To understand the administrative culture's interpretation of sex equity,

we need ways to explore the substance of their knowledge and attitudes. Research on administrators' communications suggests that they learn about policies and practices from informal and from professional associations more often than from research reports or formal training. Thus, the focus on practitioners' journals provides insight into administrator understanding, knowledge, and attitudes toward sex equity.

This research provides to proponents of sex equity a means for measuring and monitoring the quality of and quantity of sex equity policy implementation. The anaylsis of the content of practitioners' journals provides a rough measure of administrator information and depth of understanding, and it identifies shifts in practitioner journals' priority for sex equity.

This research displays a method for estimating practitioner concern for equity issues. A similar method could be used to determine practitioner concern for issues such as educational equity for handicapped people or for racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities.

This research reminds policy analysts to look beyond policy goal statements and documents showing policy outcomes. By examining the local policy translation and adaptation, analysts may better understand and explain policy outcomes. Policy analysts seeking to explain non-implementation and lack of outcomes should look at the organizational culture. Policy implementation in schools cannot be understood without knowledge of how information is disseminated, how local organizational and societal norms present barriers to implementation.

Finally, analysts must find means for examining the degree of substantive legitimacy of a policy. Without such examination analysts may miss a key

ingredient for policy implementation, that is, people's resistance to changing attitudes and beliefs. These research findings help to explain why, in spite of legal legitimacy, sex equity policy has not resulted in any restructuring of education systems.

The culture of school administration is fraught with organizational norms, mobility systems and stereotypes which prevent women from attaining high positions. Sex equity policies require educators and policymakers to use school systems to eliminate sexism by eliminating sex role stereotyping in curriculum, programs, and activities, as well as to equalize employment opportunities by providing equal pay and opportunity for entry and advancement in jobs in education systems. These sex equity policies conflict with organizational structures in schools.

Sex equity policy would require substantial change in school organizations. If sex equity had substantive legitimacy, it would require administrators and policymakers to alter procedures, behaviors, and attitudes, and implement sex equity policies through the loosely coupled education system. If we are to understand policy implementation, our research designs must allow tapping into the attitudes and the legitimation processes of people who implement those policies (Bailey, 1982; Jean and Reynolds, 1982; and Young, 1981). It is important to refine such measures because, although policymakers and implementors can and do assert determination to equalize opportunity, those assertations are not evidence that systems will be sex-fair. People do not always have the knowledge, willingness and ability to alter attitudes, behaviors and structures.

Finally, this research graphically illustrates a fundamental roadblock to sex equity. Educator knowledge appears to be shallow and scant and their valuing of sex equity as a priority is low if we assume that practitioner journals' reportage of sex equity reflects practitioner depth and breadth of understanding and concern for sex equity. As Brown (1982) has noted, government

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enforcement of equity has been undermined in the current social and political climate. Thus, the duty of examination, monitoring, and educating educators for sex equity may fall solely into the hands of practicing administrators. This investigation has shown that potential resources for educating practitioners their professional journals, have not provided sufficient understanding of sex equity.

FIGURE ONE: Government Policies for Sex Equity

Policy	Date	Requirements
Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VI	1964	Prohibits sex discrimination against students of any school receiving federal assistance.
Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII (P.L. 88-352)	1964 Amended Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1972 (to include sex) 1973	Prohibits discrimination against employees by any employer in U.S. who employs more than 15 people. Includes labor unions and employment agencies.
Equal Pay Act	1963 (Amended 1972)	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in wages and fringe benefits by any employer in the U.S.
Executive Order 11246 amended by 11375	1968	Prohibits discrimination against employees in all schools with federal contracts of $10,000 or more. Also requires written affirmation action programs for schools holding federal contracts of $50,000 or more.
Education Amendments Title IX	1972	Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex against students and any employees of schools receiving federal financial assistance.
Women's Educational Equity Act (WEEA)	1974	To provide financial assistance to enable educational agencies and institutions to meet the requirements of Title IX.
Final Regulations of Title IX	July 21, 1975 (effective)	Regulations outlining requirements and deadlines for Title IX implementation.
Vocational Education Act--1976 (P.L. 94-482)	1963	Requires states to overcome sex discrimination and stereotyping in vocational education.
Pregnancy Discrimination Act (P. L. 95-555)	1978 Amends Title VII	Discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions is unlawful sex discrimination.

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FIGURE ONE: (continued)

Policy	Date	Requirements
Title IV	Origin in the Civil Rights Act 1964	Provides funding for desegregation assistance--civil rights training and advisory services (13.405). To aid school districts to hire advisory specialists to train employees and provide technical assistance in matters related to desegregation on basis of race, sex, or national origin. Local education agencies can no longer use this. Now use Chapter II block grants to states.

FIGURE TWO: The Journals--Their Affiliation, Circulation and Editorial Policies*

Journal	Circulation	Affiliation	Editorial Policy
School Administrator	20,000	American Association of School Administrators	"reports and new items of interest to school administrators." (p.13)
PhiDeltaKappan	105,000	PhiDeltaKappa	"articles having to do with educational policy, trends, significant news, and new developments . . . . The reading audience includes educational leaders and policy makers." (p.147)
Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals	30,000	National Association of Secondary School Principals	"articles which relate to all aspects of secondary education . . . . Audience includes junior and senior high principals and other administrators." (p.10)
National Elementary Principal	30,000	National Association of Elementary School Principals	"includes articles on all phases of early childhood, elementary, and middle school education; school administration; and social issues affecting education." (p.11)

*Information from The Guide to Periodicals in Education and Its Academic Disciplines (2nd ed.) 1975, by W. L. Camp.

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FIGURE THREE

Coverage of Equity for Women in Educational Administration*

JOURNAL:	Phi Delta Kappan			The School Administrator			The Bulletin of the NASSP			The National Elementary Principal		
SUBSTANCE OF ARTICLE:	Format of Article			Format of Article			Format of Article			Format of Article		
Historical	3 P 2 Rep 2 B			1 P		1 Rep		5 Rep 6 Rep	1 B		1 Op 2 Op	
Career Patterns	3 OP 5 Rep 1 B		1 Rep 1 Rev 1 Rev		1 Rep	2 Rep 1 B		1 B	4 Rep 5 Rep	3 Rev		
Strategies/Advice for Women		2 H 3 H 1 H 3 Rep			1 H 1 H 1 H 1 H 1 H	1 Op 2 Rep		4 Op 5 H 7 H			1 Op	
Strategies/Advice for Organizations	4 H 2 H 2 P	4 H 2 H	1 P 1 P 2 P	1 P 3 Rep	1 P 1 P 1 P 1 P 1 H 1 H 1 Rep	1 P 1 Rev 1 Op 1 Op 1 P 1 P 3 Rev 3 Rev			2 H 11 Rev 4 Rev			4 Op 3 Op
Facts on Sex Discrimination and Law	5 Op 3 H 1 P 1 P 1 B	1 P 2 P 2 P 1 P 1 P 1 P 1 P 1 B 1 Rev 1 Rep 1 Rep	1 P 1 P 1 P 3 Rep 3 Rev 1 Rev 1 Rev 1 Rev 1 Rev 2 Rev	1 P 1 P 4 P	3 P 1 P 1 P 1 H 1 H	1 Op 1 P 1 P 2 P 1 Rep	10 P 5 Rev	6 H 5 Rep 1 B 6 Rev				
Attitudes Toward Women		2 Rep		1 Rep								
Comprehensive		3 Rep		2 Op								

	1972	1976	1980	1983	1972	1976	1980	1983	1972	1976	1980	1983	1972	1976	1980	1983
TOTALS	35	32	22		14	20	25		15	46	49		3	4	7	
	= 89 out of approx. 2525 pages				= 59 out of approx. 3140 pages				= 110 out of approx. 7528 pages				= 14 out of approx. 7967 pages			

*The typical length of issues was as follows:

Phi Delta Kappan	70	pages
The School Administrator	19 pages until 1980's changed to 45	pages
The Bulletin of the NASSP	125	pages
The National Elementary Principal	80	pages

-----KEY-----

Quantity of Reportage

Number represents the amount of pages devoted to sex equity for administrators in a particular issue of the journal.

Format of Reportage

- B = Book Review
- H = How to
- Op = Opinion
- P = Policy Update
- Rep = Research Report
- Rev = Research Review

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